



U.S. Department of Justice

Terrence Berg
United States Attorney
Eastern District of Michigan

*Suite 2001
211 West Fort Street
Detroit, Michigan 48226-3277*

For Immediate Release:
Contact: Gina Balaya (313) 226-9758

Dec 18, 2008

Event: Guilty Plea

Defendant: Nazeer Hamadneh et al

THREE PLEAD GUILTY IN FRAUD SCHEME

Three defendants indicted in a scheme to defraud educational institutions, including medical schools, by submitting fraudulent transcripts, pled guilty today in federal court, Acting United States Attorney Terrence Berg announced today.

Berg was joined in the announcement by Andrew G.Arena, Special Agent in Charge of the FBI and Brian Moskowitz, Special Agent in Charge of Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

Abbas Obeid aka Adam Obeid, 34, of Ontario, Canada, Roni Aoub, 27, of Southfield, and Majed Mamo, 40, of Wixom, Michigan all pled guilty to conspiracy to commit mail fraud. Abbas Obeid also pled guilty to conspiracy to commit visa fraud. Under the plea agreement, Abbas Obeid faces a sentence of between 10-16 months and/or a \$20,000 fine. Defendants Auob and Mamo face sentences of between 0-6 months and/or fines \$10,000 fine. According to the indictment filed in this case, during August 2000 and continuing through August 2008, the defendants conspired to defraud educational institutions such as Lawrence Technological University in Southfield and Madonna University in Livonia by submitting fraudulent undergraduate transcripts so that individuals, who paid a fee to the conspirators,

would fraudulently obtain transfer credits from those institutions. These credits were applied toward undergraduate degrees. Fraudulent transcripts were also submitted so that individuals would be accepted for enrollment in graduate programs. The indictment alleges that, in exchange for money, the conspirators submitted fraudulent undergraduate transcripts to medical schools located in the Caribbean and Belize on behalf of students who otherwise had insufficient undergraduate credits to enter medical school. The indictment alleges that as a result of the defendants' actions, students were admitted to medical school based on the submission of fraudulent undergraduate transcripts.

In addition, the indictment alleges that defendants Nazeer Hamadneh and Abbas Obeid conspired to submit and submitted fraudulent documents on behalf of foreign students in order to obtain student visas. The indictment further alleges that defendants Nazeer Hamadneh and Majed Mamo tampered with witnesses in an effort to prevent witnesses from providing truthful information to law enforcement.

Acting U.S. Attorney Berg said, "Making phony transcripts to deceive a university into granting college credits, or even admission to medical school, to completely unqualified students is a kind of fraud that could have all sorts of dangerous consequences, but this case also involved fake student visas as well. Our office will continue to be vigilant in pursuing all types of immigration fraud."

"Individuals who buy and sell fraudulent college credits not only cheat the educational system; but when used for medical school admissions may endanger public health. Additionally, this undermines the student visa program by allowing individuals into this country who fail to follow through on their obligation to continue their higher education," said Andrew G. Arena, Special Agent in Charge of the FBI Detroit Field Office.

"Institutions of higher learning are critical to the advancement of our society and our way of life. Individuals who gain entry into a college or university through fraud undermine the vetting process and depending upon the profession could put the public at risk" said Brian M. Moskowitz, Special Agent in Charge of the ICE Office of Investigations for Michigan and Ohio. "ICE will continue to work with our partners to close this vulnerability."

The three defendants' sentencings are scheduled for March 24, 2009.

The investigation of this case has been conducted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and Immigration and Customs Enforcement. This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S.

Attorney Cathleen Corken.